ED 423 092 AMERICAN INDIAN LANGUAGES: CULTURAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXTS.

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SILVER, SHIRLEY; MILLER, WICK R. 97 453P.

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AUTHOR	Silver, Shirley; Miller, Wick R.
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ABSTRACT

This book introduces the general reader to the mosaic of American Indian languages and cultures as they exist in time and space, and supplies limited technical linguistic orientation to encourage further exploration of language interrelationships, cultures, and other ways of knowing. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the status, diversity, and vitality of American Indian languages; government policies toward Native languages and education; and language maintenance. Chapter 2 discusses aspects of phonology and grammar. Chapter 3 addresses languages and cultural domains: plant taxonomy, geographic orientation, place names, social space, counting systems, classification systems, and world views. Chapter 4 examines language communities in the Great Basin, Pueblos, Creek Confederacy, and Aztec Empire in terms of social groupings, linguistic socialization, fashions of speaking, multilingualism, and linguistic attitudes. Chapter 5 focuses on language usage in storytelling and types of performance in Chinook, Havasupai, Navajo, and Kuna cultures. Chapter 6 discusses fashions of speaking: respect speech between social categories, men's and women's speech, baby talk, expressive speech, diminutive and augmentative forms, and linguistic markers for various speech forms. Chapter 7 examines nonverbal communication: silence, Kickapoo and Mazatec whistle speech, sign language, and long-distance or pictorial communication. Chapter 8 looks at the written languages of the Mayas, Aztecs, Cherokees, and Crees. Chapters 9-11 discuss results of language contact: multilingualism, lingua francas (pidgins and creoles), loanwords, lexical acculturation, language shift, and changes within English and Spanish. Chapters 12-14 describe the histories of language families, language as a tool to study prehistory, and the spread and distribution of language families. Appendices explain phonetic symbols and their meanings and list the language families of North America. (Contains an extensive bibliography and an index.) (SV)

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